

CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method of making a bending wave panel loudspeaker, comprising:

rigidly coupling a lever to a panel marginal portion to define a region where a suspension can be attached and wherein the lever extends at an angle to the plane of the panel,

providing the lever with a return lip at its end remote from the panel,

coupling a ~~bending-wave~~ vibration exciter to the ~~[[lever]]~~ return lip whereby bending wave energy is coupled to the panel to provide an acoustic output when the exciter is fed with a signal, and

supporting the panel on a suspension positioned outboard of the lever in said region with said suspension being adapted to provide boundary conditions which improve performance.

2. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, comprising arranging the lever to be in the form of a flange extending along a marginal portion of the panel.

3. (previously presented) A method according to claim 2, comprising arranging the flange to extend part-way along the marginal portion.

4. (currently amended) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, comprising arranging levers or flanges on a pair of opposite marginal portions of the panel, each lever or flange having a respective return lip, and coupling each ~~lever or flange~~ return lip to a respective vibration exciter whereby the ~~bending-wave~~ panel can be operated as a stereo device.

5. (previously presented) A method according to claim 4, comprising arranging a lever or flange on an adjacent marginal portion of the panel, and coupling a vibration exciter to the lever or flange on the adjacent edge or marginal portion to provide a multiple channel acoustic output.

6. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, comprising driving the lever ~~or flange~~ into resonance by the associated vibration exciter.

7. (previously presented) A method according to claim 6, comprising selecting a distributed mode device as a vibration exciter.

8. (previously presented) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, comprising positioning the exciter inboard of the lever or flange.
9. (currently amended) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, ~~comprising applying force to the lever or flange via~~ wherein the vibration exciter applies force to the return lip generally in the plane of the panel.
10. (currently amended) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, ~~comprising applying force to the lever or flange via~~ wherein the vibration exciter applies force to the return lip generally normally to the plane of the panel.
11. (canceled)
12. (currently amended) A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the ~~bending wave~~ panel is driven into resonance by the ~~or each~~ exciter.
13. (original) A method according to claim 12, wherein the resonance is of the distributed mode kind.
14. (currently amended) A bending wave panel-form loudspeaker ~~having~~ comprising:
a panel,[[;]]
a lever rigidly coupled to a marginal portion of the panel to define a region where a suspension can be attached,
a return lip on the lever at its end remote from the panel,
a vibration exciter coupled to the [[lever]] return lip to apply bending wave energy to the panel to produce an acoustic output, and
a panel suspension positioned outboard of the lever in said region with said suspension being adapted to provide boundary conditions which improve performance.
15. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 14, wherein the lever is in the form of a flange extending along the marginal portion of the panel.

16. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 15, wherein the flange extends part-way along the marginal portion.
17. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein levers or flanges are provided on a pair of opposite marginal portions of the panel, each lever or flange having a respective return lip and being coupled to a respective vibration exciter whereby the loudspeaker may be operated as a stereo device.
18. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 17, wherein a lever or flange is provided on an adjacent marginal portion of the panel, the lever or flange on the adjacent marginal portion being coupled to a vibration exciter to provide a multiple channel acoustic output.
19. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the lever or flange is adapted to be driven into resonance by the associated vibration exciter.
20. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to claim 19, wherein the vibration exciter is a distributed mode device.
21. (previously presented) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the exciter is placed inboard of the lever or flange.
22. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the vibration exciter is adapted to apply force to the ~~lever or flange~~ return lip generally normal to the plane of the panel.
23. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the vibration exciter is adapted to apply force to the ~~lever or flange~~ return lip generally in the plane of the panel.
24. (canceled)
25. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the ~~bending-wave~~ panel is adapted to be resonant to produce an acoustic output.

26. (currently amended) A loudspeaker according to claim 25, wherein the ~~bending-wave~~ panel is of the distributed mode kind.

27. (previously presented) A small electronic device having a display screen, and a transparent protective cover over the display screen, wherein the transparent protective cover is a loudspeaker as claimed in any one of claims 14 to 16.

28. (original) A small electronic device according to claim 27, wherein the device is a mobile telephone, PDA or the like.

29. (currently amended) A bending wave panel-form loudspeaker having:

- a panel;

- a lever rigidly coupled to an edge of the panel, said lever having a return member extending generally parallel to the plane of the panel at its end remote from the panel;

- a vibration exciter coupled to the return ~~lip~~ member of the lever to apply bending wave energy to the panel to produce an acoustic output; and

- a panel suspension positioned outboard of the lever.